Chickpea. A National Research Centre on Plant Biotechnology at Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IAR1), New Delhi, has been conducting plant biotechnology research. India is also partner in the International Rice Genome Sequencing Project. Towards the use of transgenics, a National Transgenic Containment and Quarantine Facility at National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR), New Delhi has been setup to facilitate research taking care of all biosafety aspects. Government is also supporting M.Sc. course in Agricultural Biotechnology in 7 Agricultural Universities to generate skilled human resource. The biosafety procedures have been further streamlined with 185 Institutional Biosafety Committees. (IBSCs) already established in various research institutions and Industrial Research & Development units. With the accelerated pace of research in transgenics, field trials of Mustard, Potato, Brinjal and Tomato are very promising.

Identification of Seismic Zones by Indo-French Task Force

1461. SHRI P. N. SIVA: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indo-French task force is likely to identify seismic zones;

(b) if so, the manner in which this is likely to be different from the currently identified seismic zones; and

(c) in what manner the new exercise is likely to help our disaster management?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RA WAT): (a) to (c) Sir, there is no proposal to identify seismic zones under Indo-French collaboration programme. The seismic zoning map of India is published by Bureau of Indian Standards and periodically updated incorporating inputs from various Indian agencies. The latest map published in 1986, is presently under revision. However, specific research projects in the area of natural disaster mitigation, including earthquakes are being discussed under the umbrella of S&T cooperation between India and France. Such scientific research inputs are critical to improving preparedness levels for effective disaster management.